

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SECURITY INFORMATION

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SUBJECT	Soviet Military, Naval, and Air Activity Along the Iranian Border	DATE DISTR.	17 April 1953
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Soviet Frontier Guard Activity, Astara Area

1. Since 9 June 1952 Soviet frontier guards attached to the Qapchi Mahalleh frontier post have been patrolling the wooded area from their post to the north of Anuz (N38-25, E48-39). They now patrol in groups of three instead of in pairs.
2. Soviet patrols were observed along the mountainous road of Almadin and Hazlu in the Astara area. Each patrol consists of four men, walking 15 meters apart from each other.
3. Soviet frontier guard officers from Soviet Astara made daily inspection visits to the Alachai frontier post (N38-27, E48-47) during the latter half of May 1952.
4. On 9 May 1952, Maj. YOLKIN, Soviet border commander of the Astara area, and Capt. SILVANOV, accompanied by several other officers, arrived in the Anuz area.
5. On 5 June 1952 a Soviet general, accompanied by three colonels, arrived by plane in Astara from Lenkoran. They stayed in Soviet Astara for several hours inspecting the frontier line and bridge, and then returned to Lenkoran. These same officers returned to Astara on 8 June 1952; after a 10-hour stay they drove to the Alachai frontier post in an automobile [REDACTED]
6. Soviet frontier guards are presently engaged in felling trees in the Anuz area before plowing a tract of land along the mountain side.
7. 1st Lt. AZIZOV, who was Col. ZHUKOV's Persian language translator at Lenkoran in 1948, has recently been serving as a translator at the Parshib border post in the Moghan area. On 1 May 1952, he was transferred to Lenkoran. AZIZOV studied Persian at the Etehadieh school in Baku, and is an efficient translator.

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(Note: When Approved)

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- Soviet Military, Air and Naval Activity

9. In March 1952, a number of men from the Astara and Lenkoran areas who were born in 1917, 1924, and 1925 were conscripted and sent to Khashmaz, Baku, and Shamakhi for short-term military training. This group returned to their homes in the latter half of May, and were replaced by a new group of men who were born in 1919, 1921, and 1922.
10. The 16th Regiment of the 2038th Division of Belorussia (sic) has been stationed in the Soviet Astara area since January 1952, under the command of Col. SIBOLSKIY and Lt. Col. PRUSHKOVICH.³ For the past month, no military operations or target practice have been observed. The soldiers of the garrison, who had been conscripted for military training for a period of 17 months, have completed most of their training. Currently they appear to be undergoing some training in "observation," but much of their time is spent in such recreational pastimes as group singing.
11. During the latter part of May 1952 a type of Soviet military aircraft not previously observed by Iranian frontier authorities commenced regular air reconnaissance flights along the Irano-Soviet frontier in the Astara area. These planes are based at Kalleh-Dahaneh airfield north of Soviet Astara.¹ Untrained observers describe the aircraft as white in color, and smaller in size than Soviet aircraft previously observed. They appear to travel considerably faster than planes observed previously and emit almost no engine noise audible to a ground observer. Observers report brilliant flashes of light from the aircraft during daylight flights, as though there were some shiny object reflecting the sun light.
12. Information has been received from Soviet Astara indicating that Gen. RAKASOVSKIY, Commander in Chief of Soviet forces in the Azerbaydzhan SSR, was relieved of his post during the latter part of May or early June.²
13. At 8:00 a.m. on 11 June 1952 Soviet naval maneuvers involving 20 Soviet warships were observed off Mayak Smino in the Sallan area. One Soviet military aircraft was observed flying above the naval formation.
14. In April 1952, Soviet naval units in the Caspian area installed a searchlight on a tower, which is located on a pier approximately 40 meters north of the Soviet School in Astara. The searchlight is 12 meters high and revolves on its axis, with a range of illumination of 24 to 30 kilometers. Since it was erected, this searchlight has been used nightly from 8 p.m. to 7 a.m. It illuminates the waters of the Caspian Sea, the banks of the Astara Chay river, and the seashore, as well as the hills around Shandan (approximately N38-25, E48-35), Alachai, Bandsar, and Artapa.
15. Soviet ships have been observed recently at night opposite Chilivand village (N38-18, E48-50) and in certain parts of the Lissar area (N37-59, E48-56). These ships approach the Iranian shore and turn their searchlights on and off at intervals. Their course is from Pahlevi (N37-27, E49-26) to the border line established by the Turkmanchay treaty, which begins at the mouth of the Astara Chay river and continues toward the Gulf of Hossein Gholi (N37-30, E54-06).

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1. Comment: Possibly Kaladagna (N38-32, E48-51) is meant.

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2. Comment: The names of Soviet personnel mentioned in this report [redacted] and may be [redacted] for example, Lukosovski may possibly be a garbled version of Rokossovskiy. Marshal Rokossovskiy is reported as Vice Premier of Poland as of November 1952, and has not been reported in the Transcaucasus area for at least two years. No other high-ranking Rokossovskiy has been identified.

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3. [REDACTED] Comment: See Source Comment No. 2 on [REDACTED] for a possible explanation of this terminology.

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